

## RFP 10-21 Answers to Vendor Questions

Three groups of questions were submitted with some overlap among them. In order to answer these efficiently, the questions have been ordered in one list and grouped into sections by vendor. When a question is asked that has been answered to some degree earlier in the list of questions, reference will be made to the earlier answer.

### Section I

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1. Will the winning bidder be guaranteed the opportunity to provide service to all 350± potential schools? If not, will the decisions as to which schools participate in the contract be made at the state, school district or individual school level?

**Answer:** School districts make the decision about whether or not to purchase from the state contract. There are individual schools that also make this decision as in the case of charter schools.

2. Should bidders assume that new customer premise equipment will be required at all locations? If not, will bidders be provided with a list of existing customer premise equipment that may be reused under the new contract? Wherever new equipment is to be provided, are there preferred equipment manufacturers or vendors, or will those selections be left to the discretion of the winning bidder?

**Answer:** Customer premise equipment is not owned by the schools and therefore would be required to be provided by the winning vendor. There is no preference for make and model of this equipment.

3. What level of after hours support will be required? Can the winning bidder retain third party contractors to provide a portion of the required service and support?

**Answer:** At a minimum, support during normal business hours (approximately 6:30 to 4:30 EST and CST) would be expected. Vendors should keep in mind that schools web sites are operational 24-7. Various support models could be used as long as a high level of customer service is the result.

4. Will the winning bidder be required to provide customer premise equipment relating to the “integrated video service” referred to in the RFP, or is the requirement merely that the connectivity provided under the contract adequately must support integrated video service?

**Answer:** The requirement is that the connectivity provided under the contract must adequately support integrated video.

5. How does the statement “[p]ricing for each level of bandwidth or type of service must be standard across the state” relate to the possibility (depending on the response to question #1 above) that less than all the 350± potential schools participate in the contract? Specifically, if a bidder provides a single price applicable to a particular service across all schools, will that bidder be required to provide that service at the proposed price even if a preponderance of the schools that participate are located in remote or high-cost areas?

**Answer:** Yes, we are expecting one price per type of service.

6. Should the winning bidder assume that the state, school districts or schools own their IP addresses under the American Registry for Internet Numbers? (If not, then it is our understanding that only the current service providers could continue to utilize the current IP addresses.)

**Answer:** Two IP blocks (165.138.0.0/16 and 165.139.0/16 have been allocated directly to the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) by the American Registry for Internet Numbers and most schools are allocated within these two blocks. We do not know the ownership status for the approximately 4 school corporations who are members of the consortium that use IP addresses outside of those assigned to the IDOE.

7. When providing “[b]ase pricing for WANs” as an optional service, should bidders assume that they will be providing customer WAN premise equipment free of charge as part of that service, or should the pricing relate to WAN services only?

**Answer:** Pricing should be for a leased WAN service where WAN premise equipment is owned and provided by the vendor as part of the proposed price.

8. With respect to the spreadsheet entitled “2latte,” are bidders expected to provide pricing for all of the individual services referred in Column D (headed “Service”)? Can you please provide additional information regarding the services referred to as “Egress,” “Tail Circuit,” “Enhanced Internet Access,” “Traffic Prioritization,” “Fiber Tail,” “Hosted FW,” “Managed FW,” “Remote FW,” “Adj from head pricing to tail,” “QOS,” “Grant Correction,” “Email –75 accounts,” “Gig Interface,” “Aug correction” and “State Grant correction” so that we can provide accurate pricing.

**Answer:** Bidders are expected to provide pricing for all of the individual services listed in the RFP section 2.5. With reference to the services listed in the spreadsheet referenced above, the following explanations apply:

- **Egress:** *Internet bandwidth to site.*
- **Tail Circuit:** *Connectivity between two sites in a single school corporation.*
- **Enhanced Internet Access:** *Firewall service variation from current provider—target responses to firewall options as indicated in the RFP.*
- **Traffic Prioritization:** *Quality of Service variation—target Quality of Service as outlined in the RFP.*
- **Fiber Tail:** *Connectivity between two sites in a single school corporation using fiber optic-based connectivity.*
- **Hosted FW:** *Firewall service variation—target responses to firewall options as indicated in the RFP.*
- **Managed FW:** *Firewall service variation—target responses to firewall options as indicated in the RFP.*
- **Remote FW:** *Firewall service variation—target responses to firewall options as indicated in the RFP..*
- **Adj from head pricing to tail:** *Billing adjustment only—disregard.*
- **QOS:** *Quality of service—target responses to Quality of Service as outlined in the RFP.*
- **Grant Correction:** *Reflects changes in the allocation of state monies due to changes in state appropriation.*
- **E-mail—75 Account:** *75 e-mail accounts for a school corporation.*
- **Gig Interface:** *Upgraded interface on provider-owned customer premise equipment.*
- **Aug Correction:** *Reflects changes in the allocation of state monies due to changes in state appropriation.*

- **State Grant correction:** *Reflects changes in the allocation of state monies due to changes in state appropriation.*

## Section II

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9. This RFP encompasses Internet access for 350+/- public and private schools including connectivity from school sites to school district aggregation site and from school district aggregation site to Internet at service speeds ranging from 1.544 Mbps to 10 Gbps per site with expectation that average site will migrate from multiple T-1s to 100 Mbps+ speed over the life of this contract.
  - a. In order for respondents to provide competitive and accurate pricing beneficial to the Indiana Department of Education consortium, please provide a **single spreadsheet** that contains: School Name, address, city, local phone number, zip code, WAN circuits, tail circuits (and their hub connections), IP address and owner, identify fiber-based service locations and their speeds, and desired access speeds for each school included in the RFP. The current site attachments (2latte.xls and 2lattf.xls) cannot be reconciled to match site locations, service speeds and NPA/NXX information.

**Answers:** Several parts to this answer—see below:

- **Single spreadsheet:** *All information regarding the school name, address, city, local phone number, and zip code is on the IDOE web site at [www.doe.in.gov/publications/schooldirectory.html](http://www.doe.in.gov/publications/schooldirectory.html). This reference tool also includes school number and corporation number which should make it possible to cross reference the service list already provided with the RFP materials. See also the definitions provided in question 8.*
  - **IP address owners:** *See Question 6.*
  - **Fiber-based service locations and speeds:** *An updated spreadsheet has been posted to the RFP site indicating current fiber installations. Service levels with fiber highlighted in yellow are based on service levels requested for 09 E-rate filing.*
  - **Desired speeds:** *We are not able to provide you with desired speeds since schools will not be completing their service level checklists for the coming service year until after the RFP response window has closed. Our experience has been that schools typically either maintain or increase their fiber consumption year over year but past experience is not a guarantee for future behavior.*
- b. A comprehensive Network Diagram is also essential to understand the existing Network and to develop a Response to the RFP, please provide.
 

**Answer:** *The Indiana Department of Education has not specified a particular network architecture in its contract with the current service provider. There are a variety of ways that a network could be organized and structured to deliver the services requested in the RFP.*
  - c. It is this respondent's desire to provide a complete and cost effective response, however without the information requested above. We do not think that is possible. It is assumed that the incumbent provider already possesses all of the above requested information. To ensure a fair and open bidding process, the information requested should be available to all bidders. When this documentation is provided, we request an additional 28 days to respond from the receipt of this new and required documentation per USAC guidelines.

**Answer:** *USAC guidelines require the Form 470 to be posted for 28 days before a contract can be let.*

10. Where fiber circuits exist the vendor must be able to continue that technology

- a. Please provide as part of the above requested **single spreadsheet**, a list of DOE Consortium locations that are fiber based, service type and speed.

**Answer:** See 9a.

11. Preference will be given to providers that can continue the service utilizing the current IP addresses

- a. Please provide as part of the above requested **single spreadsheet**, complete listing of the IP Addressing scheme, specific to each site location and the owner.

**Answer:** See 9a.

12. Vendor shall price the following as separate optional services—Web Hosting

- a. Please provide a detailed explanation of the web hosting requirements, including the management of the existing and desired web hosting environment, (type of server, operating system, physical hardware and storage space requirements etc.)

**Answer:** No schools contract for web hosting services through the current provider.

13. Vendor shall price the following as separate optional services—Voice Over IP

- a. Please provide an estimate of the number of voice calls, and the type of interface required (i.e. PRI, CAS, IP, etc.) for each DOE location to support the proposed VoIP environment.

**Answer:** VOIP is a new technology for this consortium and therefore we have no information on demand and no specifications for interface. VOIP service is allowable under e-rate however and therefore an important capacity for the selected vendor given the potential length of this contract.

14. E-mail Hosting

- a. What is the expected number of e-mail accounts currently in use and desired, on a per school basis?

**Answer:** Data on future e-mail account demand is not available but current demand includes approximately 3 school corporations totaling about 385 accounts.

15. Vendor shall price the following as separate optional services – Base Price for WANs

- a. Please explain the meaning of “Base price for WANs”.

**Answer:** The cost you would charge a school for WAN connectivity.

- b. Please provide the details of each School District’s WAN describing the design, including the existing services that interconnect each of the locations.

**Answer:** This is requested as an optional service so there is no information available at this time as to the schools which might opt for this service.

- c. Also, please provide a current network diagram of each WAN design for which services are to be proposed.

**Answer:** This is requested as an optional service so there is no information available at this time as to the schools which might opt for this service.

16. Service must include managed Customer Premises Equipment (CPE) and all required routers (updated as needed at no charge to schools), customer support must be available during normal hours of operation for consortium members (typically Monday-Friday) and must include field staff and a help desk, dedicated network support, integrated video service, access to Internet 2, and guaranteed QOS anywhere on the network. Support must also include easy-to-use reporting tools and annual consulting with schools to review and analyze bandwidth usage.

a. Please describe what conditions would cause the need for a "Router Update at No Charge".

**Answer:** *Currently, Customer Premises Equipment includes a vendor provided router. Properly functioning routers are the responsibility of the vendor and therefore would need to be replaced as needed due to routing break/fix maintenance.*

b. Describe what is meant and what the expectations are of "Field Staff"

**Answer:** *It is expected that the selected vendor would have customer service personnel in the state of Indiana to support this contract.*

c. Please provide details on requirements for "Integrated Video Service".

**Answer:** See 4.

## Section III

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17. What is the IP scheme associated with this bid and/or current network configuration?

**Answer:** See 9a.

18. What is your definition of a Tail Circuit?

**Answer:** See 8.

19. Tail Circuits - who is providing them? A school district or a carrier? Can you tell us where they are connected specifically with a street address and phone number if they are Carrier-Supplied?

**Answer:** See 9a.

20. If the Tail Circuits are Carrier-Supplied, can you tell us what speed it's running? Are these TDM circuits or Ethernet? Also, if Carrier-Supplied what do they connect to today (device type)?

**Answer:** See 9a.

21. Egress circuits - what street address and phone number do they connect to?

**Answer:** See 9a.

22. Can we see a detailed network diagram?

**Answer:** See 9b.

23. What is your definition of Enhanced Internet Access?

**Answer:** See 8.

24. What sites have fiber connectivity today? Can we get the exact street address and phone number of those locations?

**Answer:** See 9a.

25. For those schools/school districts not getting service today, but want to, is there a list of sites and phone numbers for the new ones?

**Answer:** Additional participants for the state network identify themselves on a rolling basis. The number 350 +/- was chosen based on all public schools including charters participating. See 9a.

26. Is there a list of sites that include the exact street address and phone number along with their current connectivity? For the new sites, is there a list of addresses, phone numbers and proposed connectivity speeds?

**Answer:** We will not have information about new sites until after the RFP window closes. For current sites and connectivity, see 9a.

27. I2 connectivity - is there a current port that allows this and what speed is the connection? And/or, how much bandwidth is needed to be projected over the life of the contract?

**Answer:** The current provider furnishes access for all consortium participants to Internet 2. While specific applications and use of Internet 2 at this point may be limited, we believe that its use and value will increase over the term of the contract resulting from this RFP. For more information on Internet 2, please visit [www.internet2.edu](http://www.internet2.edu) and <http://k20.internet2.edu>.

28. Are there any sites with an OC-type handoff?

**Answer:** No

29. For those sites 10Mb and up, are they all Ethernet Handoffs? For the 45Mb sites - confirm a DS3 connection only?

**Answer:** The current provider connects to the network at each directly served location via an Ethernet handoff from equipment that they own and manage at each served location regardless of the bandwidth provided. Regarding 45 Mbps sites, respond with the best solution that meets the requirements of this RFP.

30. The RFP is asking for QoS - is that network-based today or Router-Based?

**Answer:** Respondent should propose a network solution that will meet the goals of the RFP.

31. How many different classes of QoS do the districts need?

**Answer:** Respondent should propose a network solution that will meet the goals of the RFP. See 8a as well.

32. Please define "Integrated Video" - does that mean a QoS type on an existing router or a Video Bridge available via the vendors network?

**Answer:** See question 4. No hardware should be inferred as a requirement but vendors have freedom to propose solutions that address the RFP.

33. Gig Interface on page 7 of 10 is that a Port on another network? If so, indicate where it connects. Or is it a straight 1Gb Internet connection?

**Answer:** See question 8.

34. Will your existing provider allow a new vendor to use their existing IP addresses?

**Answer:** See questions 6.

35. Assuming a new vendor is awarded the contract is (it) the plan that all current members of the consortium (and new members), are moved to the new vendor on July 1, 2010? Is there any flexibility with that date?

**Answer:** The July 1, 2010 date is established by E-rate rules as the beginning of the service year—therefore, we are not able to change this date.

36. Please confirm that signing the contract presented in the RFP (with the mandatory's included), is a pass/fail situation. That is, the awarded vendor must sign the RFP-proposed contract, if so, then the rest of the criteria will apply for award consideration?

**Answer:** The state contract language in the RFP is provided as a reference for interested vendors. The mandatory clauses cannot be changed but others could be changed through a negotiation process. If you want to propose changes to non-mandatory clauses, these need to be stipulated as part of your response—See RFP section 2.3.5.

37. For any new locations will you expect the vendor to provide Inside Wiring if needed?

**Answer:** No.